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Meditation Retreat
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Transcription from Audio Recordings

File 2A – Sunday morning guided meditation

So take a few deep breaths into the belly. Feel your body. I'll be saying this quite a bit over the next seven days. But each time you feel the sensations in the body, it will be different. In truth – in reality – nothing is repeated. That's the exciting thing about it: nothing is repeated – everything is new. When you think, you're trying to repeat something that has already happened – repeat an experience. In fact, any experience, however profound, is a repetition; is tainted by a previous experience.

So enlightenment, realisation is not an experience. And you can't think about that. You can't understand that with your mind because thinking – your mind, your ego – is all about experience. The closest thing to reality that you have in this existence is your body. And what we're doing here is gradually freeing our body of our own personal past, of every experience that we've ever had, so you become more and more innocent.

So take your attention to the top of your head and feel the sensation in the top of your head; not outside it, but in your body. This isn't about watching your body. It's about feeling the sensations in your body. Feel the sensation of your eyelids on your eyes. It doesn't matter how these sensations feel. Feel your breath going through your nostrils, your mouth, your lips, your jaw, and your chin. Keep breathing into the belly, using your breath as an anchor in your body. Feel your tongue touching your palate, your shoulders. Go to your left shoulder and go down your arm to your left elbow and feel your elbow. Then go down to your left hand and feel your hand. And feel your thumb and each finger. Go to your right shoulder and feel your shoulder. Go down your arm to your right elbow, then down to your right hand and feel your hand. And feel your thumb and each finger. Take your attention to your chest and as you breathe in and out through the nose, feel the gentle movement of your chest with the breath, just a gently rising and falling. It might be quite subtle or it might be quite pronounced.

Then take your attention to your abdomen. This is our home base; this is where we keep coming back to. Don't try to hang on to it or focus but keep coming back to your breath, to the rise and the fall of your abdomen as your body is breathing. Building a firm foundation in your body is so important because as everything you thought was real is breaking down you need some sort of stability. And your body is your home, your earth. Wherever you are, you're in your body. Wherever you think you are, you're not in your body.

So feel your knees, your left foot, your right foot. Feel your spine from the top of the spine down your back to the bottom of the spine. Then feel your whole body sitting here right now in this room.

Each time you start to move away from where you are – of course your body isn't moving away, but each time you think you're moving away from where you really are – bring your attention back to the body. Use any sensation you can – it might be pleasant, it might be unpleasant – but use anything you can to be in the body. Thinking is such a seductive pass time. And that's a good description of it

– a past time. It's all about *your* personal past. No thought is new – it's all about the known, something that you have already experienced.

But you're here now doing this because you're sick of going round and round in circles, repeating experiences, having no say in your emotions, living in fear most of the time. So sit and do your best to keep coming back to where you are right now. It's so simple – not easy, but incredibly simple. Keep it as simple and body-based as possible. You don't need to remember what I'm saying. Your body will take in what it needs to take in. Use the counting.